



Iowa General Assembly

2009 Committee Briefings

Legislative Services Agency – Legal Services Division

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JOB TRAINING NEEDS STUDY COMMITTEE

Meeting Dates: [November 3, 2009](#)

Purpose. *This compilation of briefings on legislative interim committee meetings and other meetings and topics of interest to the Iowa General Assembly, written by the Legal Services Division staff of the nonpartisan Legislative Services Agency, describes committee activities or topics. The briefings were originally distributed in the Iowa Legislative Interim Calendar and Briefing. Official minutes, reports, and other detailed information concerning the committee or topic addressed by a briefing can be obtained from the committee's Internet page listed above, from the Iowa General Assembly's Internet page at <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/>, or from the agency connected with the meeting or topic described.*

JOB TRAINING NEEDS STUDY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, November 3, 2009

Co-chairperson: Senator William A. Dotzler, Jr.

Co-chairperson: Representative Wayne Ford

Overview. The Job Training Needs Study Committee is charged with examining various job training issues and needs, with a particular focus on underserved populations in Iowa. Underserved populations include people earning less than \$20,000 per year, minorities, women, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and persons convicted of felonies who are trying to reenter society after release from prison. The study committee was authorized one meeting day.

Youth Job Training Panel Discussion. Adam Lounsbury, Executive Director of the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Services, Iowa Department of Economic Development (DED), described the programs administered by the commission, including the state Green Corps and Summer Youth Corps, and attempts to coordinate or partner with these and other state and federal programs and agencies that serve the same or similar youth populations. He suggested that any incentives that can be offered to employers to entice them to employ disadvantaged youth would be extremely helpful. Jason Allen, Workforce Program Coordinator, Iowa Workforce Development (IWD), and Youth Specialist for the state under the federal Workforce Investment Act, described the Summer Youth Employment Program. Anne Marie Wiltgen, Youth Services Coordinator, IWD, described the YouthBuild USA Program.

Kevin Fineran, Director, Denison Job Corps Center, U.S. Department of Labor; Antione Terrell, Project Manager, Job Corps and the Odle Management Group; and Judy Gierstorf, Business and Community Liaison for the Denison Job Corps Center, described the Job Corps facility in Denison, the 16 to 24-year-old students recruited into the program, and the many support services provided under the program to enable students to attain their high school equivalency diplomas, engage in community service work, and complete career technical training programs.

Laurie Phelan, President and CEO, Iowa Jobs for America's Graduates (IJAG), Inc., observed that IJAG provides students likely to drop out of high school with life skills, job attainment, and academic support, assistance with postsecondary transition, and leadership development. She recommended that policymakers fund only the programs that are making a difference.

Panel presenters observed that collaboration and partnership between programs and the business community, continuous funding for the programs, and increasing the visibility of the programs are valuable components for a brighter future for the state's disadvantaged youth and the economic stability of the state.

Job Training Programs Panel Discussion

- **Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC).** Robert J. Denson, President, DMACC, provided an overview of the relationships community colleges have with the business sector; described the services provided to students; offered demographic data; provided an overview of the Central Iowa Works System, which was created after the problems arose with the Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium (CIETC); and provided career pathways maps for various job fields, information regarding a collaborative effort with Department of Human Services (DHS), and an accounting of the outcomes low-income adults can expect for

achieving postsecondary certificates and degrees. He explained the difference between state tax credits and the Code Chapter 260E (Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training) program. Community colleges partner with community agencies to deliver services, but the community colleges have capacity challenges. In today's poor economy, enrollment is up more than 20 percent at several of Iowa's community colleges. Mr. Denson observed that state aid is key to increasing community college capacity, stated that property tax levels have not kept up with the need for community college services, and asked policymakers to work to ensure that prisoners have access to federal Pell Grants.

- **Kirkwood.** Steve Ovel, Executive Director, Governmental Relations, Kirkwood Community College, observed that federal financial aid programs are applicable only to credit programs, and many of the low-skilled workers entering community college need to start in noncredit programs. He described the Gap Tuition Assistance Program, which was implemented at Kirkwood (though DMACC and Eastern Iowa Community College have similar programs) to provide the necessary assistance to these students. The program is funded as a pilot project from Kirkwood's annual Workforce Training and Economic Development Fund (created pursuant to Code Section 260C.18A) allocation that is partially funded by the Grow Iowa Values Fund.
- **DED.** Gail Kotval, Division Coordinator, Innovation and Commercialization Division, DED, described registered apprenticeship training in Iowa, the benefits of the programs, and Code Chapter 260F (Iowa Jobs Training Act) and apprenticeship training and funding. DED recommends the department work with community colleges to develop a strategy to increase apprenticeship training through the Code Chapter 260F program under the \$4 million cap, and to broaden outreach to the business community.

Workforce Self-Sufficiency Programs/Nonprofits Panel Discussion.

- **IWD.** Elisabeth Buck, Director, IWD, described the progress of the integration efforts the department is engaged in, persons served under the federal Workforce Investment Act, the services available under the federal Trade Adjustment Assistance Act and which businesses are receiving benefits, the IowaWorks Program, the labor force participation by educational attainment in Iowa; and provided a list of the state-administered workforce education and training programs. She also updated members about the unemployment insurance training extension benefits and the September 2009 Iowa unemployment rates by county. Her recommendations were submitted after the meeting and are posted on the study committee's Internet webpage.
- **DHS/IWD.** Ann Wiebers, Division Administrator, Financial Health and Work Support, DHS; and Lori Adams, Division Administrator, Workforce Center Administration Division, IWD, provided an overview of the partnership DHS and IWD maintain in administering services under the federal Family Investment Program (FIP), the PROMISE JOBS Program, and the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program. Ms. Wiebers noted that DHS administers FIP and contracts with IWD for delivery of the PROMISE JOBS Program to help FIP families become self supporting and meet TANF requirements. She identified the programs' revenue sources. Ms. Adams explained the client flow through FIP and PROMISE JOBS, and discussed the family investment agreement that participants must sign and adhere to, as well as the sanctions when participants abandon the agreement.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation.** Matt Coulter, Chief Financial Officer, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS), Department of Education, provided an overview of IVRS; data relating to the demographics of the population served by IVRS, average wages, and referrals from various sources; and offered suggestions for maximizing efficiency of the state and federal dollars for services such as collocation of offices, use of waiver dollars, and, most importantly, fully matching all available federal funds that are leveraged at \$3.69 for every state dollar.
- **Nonprofits.** Willard "Sandy" Boyd, founder of the Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center, and Professor of Law and President Emeritus of the University of Iowa, opined about the crucial role Iowa nonprofits play in enabling persons to participate in job training. He noted that decentralization of services is not a negative, as decentralization allows tailoring to local circumstances, with different agencies assisting in different aspects of client need. He defended the tax-exempt status of nonprofits and noted how heavily nonprofits depend on volunteers.
- **Master Builders.** Fernando Aveiga, representing Master Builders of Iowa (MBI), provided an overview of MBI's Multicultural Workforce Program, which focuses on preparing high-quality skilled construction workers over time for high-income jobs. The program builds bridges to nonprofit service organizations, community colleges, the construction sector board, unions, the state Energy Sector Partnership, and local schools. He is working to achieve grant support for the program so that high-skilled workers will be available when the economy recovers.

Offender Reentry Programs Panel Discussion. Clarence Key, Jr., Executive Director of the Board of Parole (BOP); Brenda Tart, Workforce Advisor, IWD; and Jerry Bartruff, Acting Deputy Director of Offender Services and Statewide Reentry Coordinator, Department of Corrections (DOC), described the career centers in Iowa prisons as a partnership of IWD and DOC that links IWD services with offenders. Referrals to the program are made through a reentry case management process that heavily involves the offender in determining the goals, actions, steps, and release plans.

IWD provides a number of services, including skill assessment, job matching, and work readiness classes. Mr. Bartruff noted that the single most significant factor in reducing recidivism is post-custody employment. He stated that communities are safer and offenders are more involved with their families when offenders are fully employed. The cost of maintaining a prisoner is \$85 a day, compared to \$3.75 daily to monitor a parolee. Ms. Tart stated that the breakdown of family has led to a high number of women incarcerated or on probation. Mr. Bartruff recommended policymakers continue funding for the career centers in Iowa's prisons and for the community colleges, which provide many educational benefits to prisoners.

Committee Discussion Regarding Recommendations. The study committee invited people attending the meeting to submit recommendations and comments to LSA for posting on the Committee's Internet webpage. Co-chairpersons Dotzler and Ford will be in contact with the members within the next few weeks regarding any proposed Study Committee recommendations.

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